



ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

Pollution Control Board Decision will reduce Water System Costs by \$2.1 Million per Year; Chicago to Save about \$1 Million/Year

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Chicago—September 21, 2015 The Illinois Pollution Control Board today finalized rules that will reduce costs to Illinois community drinking water systems by at least \$2.1 million per year, of which about \$1 million will accrue to the City of Chicago.

The Board's decision lowers the level of fluoride added to most Illinois drinking water supplies by an average of 30%. The action is in response to new guidance from the US Department of Health and Human Services indicating that lower levels of fluoridation enhance public health while still providing the desired benefits of reducing tooth decay, particularly in children.

"The Board implemented an expedited hearing process in order to permit community water suppliers to implement this new standard quickly, while still ensuring a full and complete public review of the technical and economic aspects of the change," said Gerald M. Keenan, the Board's Chairman.

Based upon the Board's revised rule, the required concentration of the fluoride ion will be 0.7 milligrams per liter (mg/L), reduced from the previous level of 0.9 to 1.2 mg/L. The Federal agency issued its recommendation on May 1, 2015.

"Working collaboratively, the Board and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency completed the necessary review and the required public hearing process in only 4 months," commented lead Board Member for this rulemaking, Dr. Deanna Glosser. "We are happy to bring this rule to a quick and successful conclusion."

"Although the Department of Health and Human Services took 4 years to finally make its decision to lower the fluoride level, we were determined to quickly bring the health benefits to Illinois citizens and the costs savings to the State's drinking water systems, most of which are publicly owned. In these difficult economic times, these savings can prevent or mitigate water price increases," Chairman Keenan emphasized.

"Government can move with dispatch to benefit citizens and local governments."

The Board's revised rules will go into effect upon final approval by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules and publication in the Illinois Register.

The Illinois Pollution Control Board is responsible for the consideration and adoption of Illinois' environmental rules, based upon the Environmental Protection Act and other Illinois laws. It also decides a broad variety of environmental cases, many of which are highly technical in nature. The Board is headquartered in Chicago, with an office in Springfield.

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